



**INDIANA COMMISSION ON COMMUNITY SERVICE & VOLUNTEERISM**  
**Meeting Minutes**

April 12, 2006  
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

**Indiana Department of Education**  
**101 W. Ohio Street**  
**Indianapolis, Indiana**

The meeting began at 10:16 AM with the introduction of guest speaker, Paul Schraeder, Regional CNCS Director, by David Reingold, Commission Chair. Due to the last minute change in meeting location from 151 W. Ohio Street to 101 W. Ohio Street, several board members were running late. The roll call was postponed until after their arrival.

Mr. Schraeder, Regional CNCS Director and area manager for the north central cluster, which includes 10 states, advised he was in the process of visiting commission board meetings in these 10 states. He came to observe, meet the commission board members and briefly talk about a few issues. He oversees three programs, Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Vista and is working with unit heads at CNCS headquarters. He works with them to get resources to incorporate programs. They are very interested in having friendly and collaborated efforts. For the most part, all 10 states work together well and he really appreciates our relationship with his office.

He also discussed the State Service Plan and indicated he had been an advocate for the last five months to get this information out but headquarters response had been slow. The first part has been sent out and replaces the Unified State Plan. The three to four member panel will review the proposal guidelines, forward to the area manager, and then to AmeriCorps in Washington, DC. Following this process, offices will receive the final guidelines. The first part of this State Service Plan is due in August. He indicated his philosophy is that best decisions are made locally.

Mr. Schraeder commended Indiana's Weed and Seed Program and indicated it was an outstanding model. Louis Lopez spoke about AIM, and about assistance from OFBCI, As a result of those efforts, he indicated that the Prison Reentry effort is actively working with Corrections and Housing Commission Authority. This program will have a significant impact on our communities.

Executive Director Paula Parker-Sawyers advised Mr. Schraeder there has been a significant change in the operation of the Corporation mainly on the AmeriCorps side. There has been a marked change, their responses are very prompt. There are no negatives at this time. One commission member asked how Louis Lopez and the Corporation share information and what can be done to encourage more consistent communication between AmeriCorps, CNCS and headquarters. Mr. Schraeder advised

there is a structure in place. Louis Lopez submits monthly communication from Indianapolis to him, and then he sends it to Mike Burning. Although this structure is in place, Mr. Schraeder indicated it doesn't work all the time. He stated he isn't sure how effective a program officer can be sitting in DC; they should be out in the field. He further stated he believes all programs should blend under one staff member (program officer) and not separate individuals. He is aware that OFBCI does a lot of cross collaboration with State and DOE. Phyllis Kincaid asked about the possibility of getting an organizational chart so the commission could get a better understanding of the process. Mr. Schraeder advised there are three program office vacancies in three states (Indiana, Wisconsin, and Ohio). Indiana and Wisconsin positions are program assistant positions. As a result of these vacancies, Illinois, Iowa and Michigan will come and assist Indiana with monitoring.

Commission Chair Reingold then read and discussed the resignation of Commissioner Bill Grover. As a result of his resignation, those present at the meeting represented a quorum.

The meeting was called to order at 10:53 AM with the official roll call. Those Commission members in attendance were:

Gloria Balerini  
Jack Brady  
Phyllis Kincaid  
Louis Lopez  
Martin Moore

James Perry  
David Reingold  
Wesley Simms  
Billy Sue Smith  
Michele Sullivan

A motion from David Reingold was made to approve the minutes from the February 8, 2006 Board Meeting as well as the Conference Call Meeting Minutes from February 13, 2006, with a few minor editorial changes (will discuss with Paula later). This motion was seconded by Billie Sue Smith. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Prior to the meeting, Gloria Balerini, advised the Commission Chair she would have to leave at 12:00 noon.

The Commission discussed funding considerations for the 2006-2007 program year in three groups: (1) reconsideration requests from current grantees; (2) reconsideration request from a new applicant; and (3) new applications for combination planning/operating grant funding.

#### 1. Reconsideration Requests from Current Grantees

##### *Lutheran Child & Family Services of Indiana/Kentucky:*

Deputy Director Cecelia Johnson-Powell explained that the Commission declined the proposal from LCFS in February, due to (in summary) a lack of clarity, budget concerns, and the absence of a strong case for support. LCFS is currently in its third year of AmeriCorps funding and the organization chose to resubmit an application for consideration.

- Commissioners expressed concern that the application read like a tutoring program, but did not include information on how the program would be conducted, the curriculum to be used, and plans for assessing the students' progress. They

felt there was not enough documentation in the proposal to assess that the organization would successfully conduct the tutoring program in compliance with the AmeriCorps guidelines and No Child Left Behind Act.

- A Commissioner stated that this organization works with a specialized population and therefore need specialized staff in this role, not a national service member.
- Louis Lopez stated that the Corporation's State Office has major concerns with this organization related to the VISTA program and that a VISTA member will not be placed at LCFS in the future.
- Ms. Parker-Sawyers stated that LCFS' funding was suspended last year due to recruitment concerns and a lack of responsiveness on the part of the program. These issues have since been resolved.
- The Commission feels LCFS' mission is worthy and of high-value and looks forward to seeing a proposal in the future with more and accurate details.

James Perry moved and Jack Brady seconded a motion to deny funding to Lutheran Child & Family Services of Indiana/Kentucky. The motion passed 9-0. One Commissioner, Wesley Simms, abstained from the vote.

*Habitat for Humanity of Indiana:*

- Cecelia Johnson-Powell explained that Habitat for Humanity of Indiana was approved for funding by the Commission at the February meeting at a lower level than requested. Habitat appealed that decision and requested a formal request for reconsideration.
- Ms. Johnson-Powell noted that a program summary originally shared with the peer review panel and Commission contained some incorrect information. A corrected copy has been distributed.
- Ms. Johnson-Powell and Executive Director Paula Parker-Sawyers visited each current grantee that was approved for funding next year and discussed the Commission's decisions made at the February meeting. During their meeting, Habitat stated that the \$82,000 funding reduction would severely impact their program.
- Louis Lopez stated that Habitat also runs a VISTA program, and the member slots have been terribly underutilized in the past. In the future, the Corporation's State Office will support Habitat with VISTAs through Horizon House, rather than directly through Habitat.
- Commission Chair David Reingold shared a complaint letter OFBCI received from a former HabiCorps member alleging that Habitat did not follow through on the member's worker's compensation claim.
- There is concern regarding the organization's administrative capacity and attention to detail.
- It is important to the Commission that grantees adhere to the expectation that programs be administered with full attention to detail. It was suggested that Habitat increase their administrative support of the program to address this issue.
- A Commissioner suggested that Habitat was focusing more on the quantity of participating affiliates, rather than the quality of support the affiliates give to the AmeriCorps program.
- A Commissioner suggested that contingencies be placed on their funding, such as strengthening their administrative support and/or increasing financial support for the program from sources other than affiliate match.

- A Commissioner discussed the challenges of getting members out to rural areas, and Habitat's potential as a great intermediary to accomplish this.
- Questions were raised about the supervision of members at some of the smaller affiliates which may or may not have paid staff.

Billy Sue Smith moved and Phyllis Kincaid seconded a motion to award Habitat for Humanity of Indiana \$352,545, with the possibility of an additional \$30,000 contingent upon demonstration that program requirements set forth by the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives are met. The motion passed 10-0.

## 2. Reconsideration Request from a New Applicant

### *Indianapolis Housing Agency:*

- Cecelia Johnson-Powell explained that the Commission invited IHA to submit a proposal for a combination planning/operating grant after their operating grant proposal was denied in February. She explained that, according to the housing authority's federal grading system, IHA has an "okay bill of health."
- There is concern from the Commission about their ability to manage the grant and appropriately utilize members.
- A Commissioner questioned whether residents were well-suited as AmeriCorps members.
- Another noted that the proposal reads like a jobs program, as opposed to a national service program. The Commissioner asked whether it is in the Commission's interest to move funds through this type of program.
- A Commissioner responded that government agencies are encouraged to collaborate, so it is a leveraging of resources to fill a tremendous need within IHA.
- A Commissioner stated that it is difficult to invest national service funding in an organization that is already supported by federal dollars. He questioned whether this is what the Commission wants national service to be in Indiana.
- Paula Parker-Sawyers asked the Commissioners to think about the purpose of a national service program. She stated that she does not think some of the current members understand the nature of service and civic responsibility. If more programs seem to be "employing" members rather than engaging them in service, we will see more of this.
- A Commissioner stated that this is not the most effective use of government funds, but it is a start for a population that is in serious need. The effort will greatly benefit them, but it is unclear how easily IHA will meet their outlined objectives.
- There are many resources IHA could explore to address the digital divide.

James Perry moved to deny the Indianapolis Housing Agency funding with the premise that the Commission would work with IHA to develop a future proposal. No one seconded the motion and the motion died.

Wesley Simms moved and Billy Sue Smith seconded a motion to fund Indianapolis Housing Agency at the requested level of \$149,928. The motion was denied 1-9.

Billy Sue Smith moved and Wesley Simms seconded a motion to fund Indianapolis Housing Agency for \$63,000 (up to five (5) full time equivalents at \$12,600 each) as a pilot program. The motion was denied 2-8.

Michele Sullivan moved and Martin Moore seconded a motion to have OFBCI staff work with IHA to rework the proposal and resubmit for consideration at the June meeting. The motion passed 10-0.

### 3. Applications for Planning/Operating Grants:

Ms. Johnson-Powell reviewed the timeframe and process related to the planning/operating grant applications. Prior to awarding any funding to a new applicant, OFBCI will conduct a pre-award risk assessment on-site visit to determine each organization's fiscal and organizational capacity to operate an AmeriCorps program. This includes the two new applicants awarded funds in February.

Phyllis Kincaid moved and Michele Sullivan seconded a motion to award three-month planning/nine-month operating grants to Family Focused Nurturing Services, Inc. for up to \$126,000 (up to ten (10) full time equivalents at \$12,600 each), Indianapolis Coalition for Neighborhood Development for up to \$126,000 (up to ten (10) full time equivalents at \$12,600 each), and Workforce Development Strategies, Inc. for up to \$116,443, all contingent upon a satisfactory pre-award assessment. The motion passed 10-0.

Following lunch, Paula spoke about the success of the 2006 Governor's Conference on Service and Volunteerism. She highlighted the full sessions, the Awards Dinner, and advised that some local news stations videotaped parts of the conference. We received positive feed back about the conference as well as constructive criticism.

Due to Gloria Balerini's departure, Commission members Elizabeth Heintz and Mark Dobson, were contacted via phone so they could participate in the voting.

### 3. Applications for Planning/Operating Grants (continued):

Phyllis Kincaid moved and Michele Sullivan seconded a motion to award Gary YWCA a three month-planning/nine-month operating grant for up to \$63,000 (up to five (5) full time equivalents at \$12,600 each), contingent upon a satisfactory pre-award assessment. The motion passed 6-2.

Martin Moore moved and Billy Sue Smith seconded a motion to award Oasis Christian Development Corporation a three month-planning/nine-month operating grant for up to \$88,200 (up to seven (7) full time equivalents at \$12,600 each), contingent upon a satisfactory pre-award assessment. The motion passed 8-0.

Michele Sullivan moved and Martin Moore seconded a motion to accept the recommendation of the peer review panel not to fund the proposals from the Housing Authority of the City of Fort Wayne, Indiana and United Way of Delaware County. The motion passed 8-0.

Following the Planning Grant Reviews, there was further discussion reference the Updated State Service Plan Process. Paula advised there would be a future meeting scheduled to deliberate this plan. She asked the Commission to be prepared to share their thoughts. We will be bringing the review process into full completion and will share with them and highlight it. The Commission will then be asked to view and comment on it. It will serve as the basis for OFBCI's response to the CNCS in August. Michele Sullivan advised DOE will share their plan as well.

Executive Director Paula Parker-Sawyers' advised OFBCI has submitted a Learn and Serve Grant to reestablish Youth Commission/Governor's Youth Corps. The results will be announced on June 12, 2006. She also advised that we conducted a recruitment workshop and program officers were very impressed with the program. They asked for a binder to use as a model for other states. The dedication of the Solution House is scheduled for May 13<sup>th</sup>. She also advised to date that three monitoring visits have been completed and that all close outs are done except Elkhart EnviroCorps. Ms. Parker-Sawyers stated we are continuing to have a problem with IU Research and Grants Program. It took 5 months to get contract through IU, with a total of 8 months to get through the entire system. IU AmeriCorps grantees struggle as a result of this.

There is a Summer VISTA initiative to get an accurate count of homeless and number of homeless shelters in the county. It is a 10 week program. Those working on this project receive a stipend plus a \$1,000 scholarship.

The OFBCI is applying to be a host site for a VISTA program. One goal is to have them embrace this as a service initiative instead of an employment opportunity. Part 1 will be the recruitment of members; part 2 will be the recruitment of programs.

Martin Moore made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Michele Sullivan. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Simpson, Administrative Assistant  
Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives